

Grants available for education, marketing, and research of specialty crops

DOVER – Nearly \$300,000 in federal grant funding is now available for projects to help increase the competitiveness of Delaware-grown specialty crops. The Delaware Department of Agriculture is accepting applications for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program through May 15, 2017.

The program, funded through the federal Farm Bill, covers products known as specialty crops, including fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture. Projects may run for one to three years. Grants are available between \$5,000 and \$50,000.

Applications should be submitted by agricultural producers, nonprofit organizations, government entities, for-profit companies or educational institutions based in Delaware or with a business or educational affiliation here. Funding cannot be used for field crops, such as corn and soybeans, or animal agriculture.

An informational grant workshop will be held 5 p.m. April 12 at the Delaware Department of Agriculture, 2320 South DuPont Highway, Dover.

Past Delaware projects have included research on heat-tolerant lima bean varieties, efforts to expand a community-supported agriculture program, research on edible truffle mushrooms, and marketing to promote locally grown specialty crops.

Applications are available at de.gov/scbg, or from DDA marketing specialist JoAnn Walston at 302-698-4592 or joann.walston@delaware.gov. Due to a change in the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant cycle, applications are due a month

earlier this year. Applications must be received by 4:30 p.m.
on May 15.

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